

$$E = MC^2$$

Energy = MindConstruction²

Energy = MindCognition²

Energy = MindConsciousness²

Our comprehension of the world is limited by our senses and our brain's ability to provide a meaning. The world that appears to be out there is not really something existing out there. The idea of "existence" and even "time" and "space" are creations of the processes of perception and conception. They are really pictures produced inside the brain, just as a camera does inside the camera. However, it is the brain that gives meaning to them. All this happens without our knowledge. We are not doing it consciously. This is why there is no "ego" or "self" or "soul" controlling the mind or body. Modern psychologists, scientists, as well as modern philosophers are aware of this fact. This means, the creator of the world is our own mind, and each individual is living in a "self-created" autonomous world. Although we live in a world of our own making, we communicate with one another through the medium of language, and thereby we build up the idea of a really existing world outside. Through exchange of ideas within a culture, we build up a cultural or religious view of the world, which is common only within the culture. This is why each culture has a different view of life, a different religion, and a different way of doing things. When we meet a person from another culture we begin to see that person as somewhat strange, weird, or offbeat not only in appearance but also in thought, feelings, and behavior.

It is very important to recognize this fact in the modern world, where there is so much international and intercultural communication. This is not merely a Buddhist dogma, but a fact recognized in modern biology, psychology, and philosophy. It is an observable fact, which was also recognized by the Buddha. Buddhism is not based on dogmas or beliefs but on the observation of experience (*ehipassiko*). Modern scientists and psychologists seem to be only rediscovering what the Buddha discovered centuries ago (*paccattaṃ veditabbo viññuhi*). This is why Buddhism has been a science rather than a religion from its inception. It was not a physical science like the modern physical sciences that focus attention only on the external world that is considered to be matter and energy.

Buddhism, on the other hand, is a mental introspective (*opanayiko*) science, or psychology. This is why Buddhism shares similarities with Freudian introspective psychology. Modern quantum physics is only beginning to recognize the fact that objective matter and energy are really subjective concepts.

Once a “*Deva*” (celestial being) visited the Buddha and asked a question. “*If a person could travel in space at an extremely high speed, can he reach the end of the world?*”

“No,” was the Buddha’s reply.

“*Without reaching the end of the world, however, one cannot bring suffering to an end,*” continued the Buddha.

He further said: “*The world, the beginning of the world, the end of the world, and the way leading to the end of the world is in this fathom long body itself, along with its perceptions and conceptions (sannimhi samānake).* In other words, this “world” and the “self” are products of the process of perception and cognition. (*Rohitassa Sutta Ang. II 46 iv, v,45*)

Immediately after his Awakening, the Buddha is supposed to have said:

*“Many a life in Saṅsāra did I run
Seeking the Creator but all in vain
Never did I meet him, it was not fun
Painful is birth again and again*

*Now you’re seen, you creator of pain
Never will you create this pain again
Thy structure is dismantled
Thy foundation destroyed
The mental creation did stop
The emotional urge did drop.”*

It was before the Buddha's Awakening that he searched for the Creator through many lives as a Bodhisatta. It was during his Awakening from the dream of existence and becoming a BUDDHA that he realized that the Creator was his own mind. This means the world that we are aware of is the product of a subjective mental process rather than an independent existence of an objective reality. In existential terminology, it is an existence without an essence, where existence denotes that it is, and essence denotes what it is. In Kantian terminology, the world and self are phenomena without a noumenon. In still another way of speaking, the world and self are appearances and not realities.

Awakening from this dream of existence is what the Buddha taught. This awakening cannot be achieved by the Buddha for others. It has to be done by each individual by oneself. The Buddha can only show the way.

This subjective mental process described by the Buddha explains how the world, self, and suffering came into being through a series of logical antecedents. It is this description that is called the Concurrence of Antecedents (*paticca samuppāda*). Concurrence of Antecedents is based on a natural law on which all natural events, both physical and mental, are based. This law is recognized today in the Western world as Determinism, which is the basis of all modern scientific technology. This law was recognized in the West only during the 18th Century, when science began. This period is today called the Age of Enlightenment. Before this period Western thought was governed by the religious dogma that every natural event occurred only due to the power of God, the supernatural Creator of the world. When this law of determinism was recognized educated people lost faith in religious dogmas. As a result, many revolutions took place such as the French revolution, and the Marxist revolution.

This law of Determinism was used in the West to conquer nature, and transform the natural environment to suit the needs of hungry humanity. All the modern wonders of scientific technology is the result of the use of this law of determinism.

This conquest of nature however has not solved the problem of existence. The problem of existence is that all living organisms on this planet, both animals and plant, are struggling to exist in an environment that is detrimental to the struggle. The struggle continues despite this detriment and the result is what we call the evolution of the species. The result of this evolution is the origination of the human being with a brain that can think and become aware of this problem.

It was this intelligent human being that began to use his intelligence to conquer nature. This effort of the human being is a failure because it has only resulted in an approach to the utter destruction of all life through nuclear war.

This human being has not even looked into the problem or become aware of the problem, though it has blindly struggled to conquer nature. It was in the East that the human being became aware of the problem with the coming of the BUDDHA. It was the Buddha who used the intelligence to understand the problem, its cause, and its solution by removing the cause.

What the Buddha saw was that this unconscious struggle to exist was a mistake. It was an impossible struggle against nature. Existence is a static concept in a dynamic reality. We are suffering from a delusion of existence. Existence is only a dream from which we must awaken.

It is interesting to note that when we think of ourselves, we are thinking of an image in our mind, not a real existing object that can be seen. This image can even change in different circumstances. When someone takes a picture of me and shows it to me, I begin to think it cannot be my real “self,” because it is different from the picture I have in my mind. This proves that what I call my “self” is only a picture in my mind that even changes from time to time, and a series of sensations in my body that also changes from time to time. In other words, what I call my “self” is only a collection of cinematographic pictures and sensations stored in my memory, which I can replay whenever I need. This was why the Buddha called it the fivefold mass of personalized constituents of perception that form a personality (*panca upādānak khandā*).

Having created a self this way we are bringing about a paradigm of relationships between the “self” that exists, and the “objects” perceived as existing. The relationship is filled with emotions in the form of likes and dislikes. It becomes a paradigm of emotional existence. We normally live in this paradigm, which is a mass of suffering. It is this paradigm that the Buddha called Being (*bhava*). This paradigm of being is the paradigm of insecurity and suffering (*dukkha*) because it is filled with emotional disturbances.

When we then begin to become aware of the process of perception, we begin to realize that suffering is involved with this paradigm or way of thinking and we begin to think in a different way. The object perceived is only a creation of the process of perception. When we focus our attention on the process of perception we are aware that what we see is not a real object outside but a mental image, which is inside our head. In other words, both subject and object are not seen as existing as in existential thinking. Whatever is seen, heard, smelt, tasted and touched, is only a sight, sound, smell, taste, or touch and the objects are understood to be only a product constructed by the process of perception.

This means, the object perceived is not a reality but an illusion or delusion. An illusion is a perceptual fallacy, and a delusion is a conceptual fallacy. The object perceived is seen as a mental image (*rupa*), like a picture taken by a camera. The mental image is formed by the process of construction (*sankhāra*) the colours seen are the sensations (*sannā*), which are felt as pleasant or unpleasant (*vedanā*). The images are identified (*vināna*) as objects (*rupa*) by giving them names (*nāma*).

This transformation of thinking is the paradigm shift from existential thinking to experiential thinking. Then there is neither subject nor object nor emotional relationship with its insecurity and suffering. There is only the process of perception, tranquility and peace of mind. This is how one Awakens from the dream of existence. In so doing all suffering comes to an end.

Cognitive psychologists realized that psychology has to be the study of the mind or mental processes, and that we cannot know about the mind by looking only at the body and its behaviour. Thus did the school of Cognitive Psychology come into being. Modern scientists dealing with quantum physics have begun to realize that the physical world that they attempt to discover is actually a mental construct. There are many books written on this subject by scientists as well as philosophers. Since modern physicists began to realize that the external world is only a product of perception and conception, objectivity has become a misnomer and a myth. In fact, there is no “object out there” to look at, other than what “seems to be out there.” This is why the Buddha called the **object experienced**, *nāma-rūpa*, which means, **mental image** (*rūpa*) and its **identity** (*nāma*), and the **subjective experience** was called, *viññāna*, which means, the **process of perception**. The Buddha also saw that there is neither a “**person**” that perceives, nor “**an entity**” that is being perceived. There is only the “**process of perception**.” This means, the “**seer**,” which is the subjective experience, and the **object “seen**,” which is the objective experience, are both **mental constructs** and **not real entities** that **really “exist”** in **real time** and **real space**.

Even **space** and **time** are **mental constructs**. This is the meaning of “**emptiness**” (*suññatā*) of **experience**, which **Mahayana** Buddhists lay **stress** on. Without understanding this **basic premise** on which the teaching of the Buddha stands, we cannot understand the **problem** we are **about to discuss**. It is interesting to know that the Buddha is called *Tathagata* (*tath* = that; *agatha* = arrived at), which means the **one who comprehended the objective “world”** (that) to be a **subjective experience**, and the subjective “**self**” to be a **delusion**. This is also expressed in Sanskrit as *tat tvamasi* (**you are that**). This means “**existence**,” both subjective and objective, are **delusions** or creations of the subjective mental process of perception and conception. They are not real entities but appearances.

The aim of the **Buddha** was to solve the **problem of human existence** called **suffering**, which has to be **achieved by each individual**, examining one's own experience, and not by examining other's experience. The **result** is the **disappearance of unhappiness**, which is observable by one-self as well as by others. The **systematic technique** of the Buddha for the observation of one's own experience was called **systematic introspection** (*satipatthāna*). Sigmund Freud's method of **psychoanalysis** through free association is also a **method of introspection**, where the patient is helped by the analyst to observe the patient's own mind. This explains why some of the **findings of Freud** are almost what the **Buddha had pointed to** many centuries earlier.

From this realization one begins to further realize that from a state of complete unknowing (*avijjā*) one perceives objects through the process of perception (*avijjā paccayā sankhārā, sankhāra paccayā viññānan, viññāna paccayā nāma rūpan*). Objects are perceived (*viññāna*) as named images (*nāma-rūpa*). Into these named images are added sounds, smells, tastes, and touches by the brain (*mano viññāna*) and thus produce objects that exist in time and space (*nāma rūpa paccayā salāyatanan, salāyatana paccayā passō*). The term *phassa* is commonly translated as **contact**, which is an error. *Phassa* means creating *a posteriori* objects, which are supposed to exist in time and space.

Once the existing objects have been created, they begin to arouse feelings pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral. This results in emotional reactions to pleasant, unpleasant and neutral feelings. This creates a dichotomy between a subjective reaction and an objective outer experience. The subjective experience is personalized as mine and the objective experience is alienated as foreign. Personalization creates the personality or "self." It is the process of perception and the emotional reaction that becomes the "self." The "self" when pointed to as a "self" that exists in time and space, happens to be the "body" (*sakkāya ditthi*). When the body becomes the "self," it not only occupies space, it also occupies time. To occupy time is to have a past, present and future. Then the past of the body is its birth, the future is its death, and the present is its aging. This fact brings about grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and exhaustion. Thus arises the entire mass of suffering.